Environmental cost of Narmada Sagar Project

2396. SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a report in the Indian Express of the 19th July, 1988 to the effect that the environmental cost of the Narmada Sagar Project would be about Rs. 30.923 crores;

(b) if so, what are the facts thereot and how this figure has been arrived at; and

(c) what are the details of the recommendations of the Ministry for the rehabilitation of the rural and tribal people displaced from the area and also the estimated cost thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The environmental cost @ Rs. 126.74 lakh per ha. for the loss of forest with density 1 is calculated as per the empirical formula devised by the Forest Research Institute, Dehradun. This covers the loss of soil fertility, depletion of oxygen, depletion of ground water reserves and soil erosion, etc., over a period of 50 years without following the discounted cash flow procedure.

(c) The project authorities are to prepare Master Plans for rehabilitation of the oustees in such a way that the rehabilitation is completed before the submergence starts. Preparation of the rehabilitation plans is being done under the guidance of a Sub-Committee of the Narmada Control Authority. Cost estimates would be known only when the Master Plans are ready.

Withdrawal of educational facilities provided to the children of Sri Lankan Tamils staying in Tamil Nadu

2397. SHRI ALADI ARUNA *alias* V. ARUNACHALAM: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the reasons for which the Central Government have withdrawn the educational facilities provided to the children of Sri Lankan Tamil staying in Tamil Nadu; and

(b) what measures have been taken by Government to protect the educational facilities for the children of Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) The Government of India have not withdrawn the educational facilities provided to the children of Sri Lankan Tamils staying in Tamil Nadu. The facilities which were hitherto available to Sri Lankan students for studying in India continue to be available to them.

(b) Clarificatory instrutcions have been issued to the Government of Tamil Nadu to allow the children of Tamil refugees to continue to pursue their studies in schools, colleges and technical institutions, and to accept the Refugee Identification Certificate as adequate proof of *bona fide* status.

Concessional interest on loans for fixed assets

2398. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration for charging concessional rate of interest on loans for fixed assets used for export production; and

(b) if so, by when the scheme is likely to be announced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) and (b). The Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) has reported that all-India term lending institutions do not extend concessional rates of interest, as such, on loans given for acquisition of fixed assets used for export production.

However, institutions are operating an export incentive scheme allowing rebate of 1/5th of interest payments (subject to a floor rate of 10 per cent) on rupee loans contracted on or after 1-12-1986 by industrial concerns whose exports sales on F.O.B. value of own manufactured goods reach or exceed 25 per cent of their total net sale in the year.

Launching of Exchange Risk Protection Scheme

2399. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Exchange Risk Protection scheme for corporate borrowers taking foreign exchange loans, which was to be launched during July, 1988 has been delayed;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) by when the scheme is likely to be launched?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) to (c) Various aspects of the scheme are still under consideration and the scheme would be launched as soon as these are finalised.

Opening of current accounts by Maharashtra Gram Panchayats

2400. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Reserve Bank of India has sent an order asking Gram Panchayats in Maharashtra to change their Savings Bank Accounts into current accounts; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons behind this order?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) and (b). The information is being collected and to the extent available will be laid on the Table of the House.

Clearance of Haldia Petrochemical Project

2401. SHRI CHITTA BASU:
SHRI SUNIL BASU RAY:
SHRI RAMNARAYAN GOSWAMI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that special Committee of the Finance Ministry has raised some objections against the clearance of the Haldia Petrochemical Project in West Bengal;

(b) if so, what are the specific objections;

(c) what is the reaction of West Bengal Government to these obejctions; and

(d) what decision the Central Government have taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) to (d). No Special Committee as such has been set up in the Ministry of Finance for clearance of the Haldia Petrochemical Project. In view of the large size of the project, the Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) have however, constituted an expert committee. Considering the complexity and enormousness of the Project, the institutions need to examine fully the various aspects in appropriate detail. The IDBI have indicated that the size of the ethylene plant proposed is below the minimum economic size and that there is a gap in the total finances planned. The revised projections are awaited from the company. Government of West Bengal is informed of these developments.